



# ATOM BRIEFS

Volume 85-11

December 19, 1985

## A Farewell Salute To NLO

"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times."

That famous line from "A Tale of Two Cities" seems especially appropriate for this edition of Atom Briefs.

Inside this edition, there are stories about Christmas parties, dancing and merry-making. There is also an account of our employees' activities association collecting food, toys and money to share with those less fortunate.

All very apropos.

Just by coincidence, the Fernald Atomic Trades and Labor Council is collecting money for the same agency, called Shared Harvest. There may be something symbolic there.

The Christmas activities and efforts will not be our lead story this month. May God grant there will be more Christmases and other opportunities.

Our major effort, feeble as it may be, is "A Salute to NLO".

Some may deride it. We think it is long overdue and richly deserved.

NLO is leaving the FMPC. We don't know the date. The best fix we can get is "early next year." All that is to be determined by contracts being negotiated by NLO and DOE and Westinghouse and DOE. It could be January 1, 1986. Thus, our effort this month.

For more than 34 years, NLO, Inc. has been the government contractor at the FMPC. For more than 33 years, they were happy, rewarding years. One year ago the Plant 9 dust collector leaked uranium dust. We won't repeat the details. They are all too familiar.

Suffice to say that things were never the same again.

That unfortunate incident should not detract from 33 years of living within the limits - regulatory, budget, employment, and otherwise. All production schedules were met with products of the highest quality. Even the critics admit that.

If it was not a good place to work, why did children follow their parents here? Why did countless people leave and come back? Why do almost 25 percent of our employees have more than 25 years service? NLO held this place together and provided jobs for years when the funding level was woefully inadequate.

If FMPC is dangerous and a health threat, where is the hard, documented evidence?

When NLO leaves, it will take with it 258 years of top management experience and expertise. We can't help but miss eight managers who have spent most of their working lives here.

But Westinghouse has brought in its very best from all over the country, and has demonstrated unusual skill and understanding of those things needed to improve images.

Starting with a clean slate, perhaps Westinghouse will not encounter the restrictions which kept NLO from defending its record.

We asked Westinghouse for a statement on the transition. That statement is as follows:

"We have had very good cooperation from FMPC and NLO management and see no issue or problem which would preclude a smooth transition. We believe that the transition can be made on January 1, 1986."

So we come to the first change of contractors in the history of the FMPC.

To NLO, a salute for a job well done. You can leave FMPC with your head held high.

To Westinghouse, you have made us excited about the future, too.

Congratulations. Merry Christmas. May God Bless.

Pete Kelley

